



Australian Government

MSS027005 Contribute to improving environmental performance

Release: 1

MSS027005 Contribute to improving environmental performance

Modification History

Release 1. Supersedes and is equivalent to MSS027005A Contribute to improving environmental performance

Application

This unit of competency covers the ability to perform activities associated with the review or internal audit of the environmental performance of a workplace. Personnel work under the guidance of a manager or a lead auditor and the scope of activities performed will depend on their job role, the size of the workplace and complexity of its environmental management system (EMS) and auditing requirements. They also work under the supervision of an environmental scientist or engineer, site manager or workplace environmental manager.

This unit of competency is applicable to environmental site coordinators, environmental managers and senior environmental officers working in all industry sectors. Note that the term 'manager' is used to refer to management of a function, project and/or program and does not necessarily imply line management.

While no specific licensing or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of publication, environmental monitoring and management activities are governed by relevant legislation, regulations and/or external accreditation requirements. Local requirements should be checked.

Pre-requisite Unit

Nil

Competency Field

Management

Unit Sector

Environmental

Elements and Performance Criteria

Elements describe the essential outcomes.

Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element.

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| 1 | Plan review/audit activities with manager or lead | 1.1 | Review legislative and/or regulatory compliance requirements and relevant workplace policies and procedures. |
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auditor	1.2	Clarify objectives and scope of the activities planned together with the risks, constraints and resources available.
	1.3	Clarify site, sections, work areas, functions and/or practices to be reviewed/audited.
	1.4	Confirm own role and responsibility for specific review/audit tasks.
	1.5	Plan the review/audit activities to minimise workplace disruption and ensure they can be safely conducted within agreed time intervals/timeframes.
2	Prepare for assigned review/audit activities	2.1 Gather background information relevant to site, sections, work areas, functions and/or practices to be reviewed/audited. 2.2 Scrutinise the relevant review/audit criteria, tools and evidence requirements to enhance own objectivity and attention to detail. 2.3 Identify any technical and equipment requirements for review/audit and if support personnel are required. 2.4 Inform all personnel involved and arrange meetings or appointments, as necessary.
3	Conduct assigned review/audit activities	3.1 Collect a representative sample of site documentation. 3.2 Collect sufficient information from observations and interviews to provide reliable evidence of environmental performance. 3.3 Work cooperatively with personnel to maximise their ownership of the review/audit and identify opportunities to improve environmental performance. 3.4 Keep accurate records of observations and interview responses.
4	Analyse information and	4.1 Analyse information to identify significant performance trends, patterns, gaps and areas of risk.

evaluate performance	4.2	Recognise instances of non-conformance/non-compliance and identify options for improving performance.
	4.3	Evaluate performance against specified benchmarks and support conclusions with appropriate evidence.
	4.4	Seek manager or lead auditor's advice when issues or problems are beyond own scope of responsibility/competence or when input from environmental specialists may be required.
5 Report review/audit results	5.1	Document results in accordance with relevant standard/workplace procedures and compare with initial objectives.
	5.2	Confirm results with manager/lead auditor.
	5.3	Report results to appropriate personnel for action in accordance with workplace procedures.

Foundation Skills

This section describes those required skills (language, literacy and numeracy) that are essential to performance.

Foundation skills essential to performance are explicit in the performance criteria of this unit of competency.

Range of Conditions

This field allows for different work environments and conditions that may affect performance. Essential operating conditions that may be present (depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts) are included.

Legislation, regulations, standards, codes, workplace procedures and requirements include the latest version of one or more of:

- federal legislation, such as the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, Australian Heritage Council Act, Native Title Act and National Environmental Protection Measures
- state/territory government legislation and local government by-laws, policies, regulations and plans dealing with land use, acquisition, planning and protection; environmental protection; cultural/heritage protection; vegetation management; nature conservation and wildlife/plant protection; water and water

management; soil conservation; pollution and contaminated sites; fisheries, forestry and mining operations

- legislation, standards and codes of practice for work health and safety (WHS), and handling of dangerous goods
- Australian and international standards covering environmental management (e.g. AS/NZS ISO 14000 Basic Set:2007 Environmental Management Basic Set); quality and/or environmental management systems auditing (e.g. AS/NZS ISO 19011:2014 Guidelines for auditing management systems)
- registration/licensing and/or accreditation requirements
- site/project/program information, such as applicable legislative requirements and approval requirements, site processes, work schedules, emergency preparedness and response procedures, job hazard analyses, safe work procedures and work method statements, and sampling and in-situ measurement procedures (e.g. water, air, noise and soils)
- workplace environmental management system, plans, monitoring/inspection procedures and management actions to prevent/control environmental impacts or risks for specific sites, projects and/or programs (e.g. sampling, monitoring, construction and mining)
- workplace documents, such as standard operating procedures (SOPs); work schedules; audit/review procedures; recording and reporting procedures; equipment manuals and warranties; safety data sheets (SDS) and safety procedures; waste minimisation, containment, processing and safe disposal procedures.

Scope of review/audit activities includes one or more of:

- components of an initial environmental review (IER) prior to establishing an environmental management system (EMS)
- periodic inspection against environmental management plan requirements for:
 - monitoring and measurement
 - materials and energy usage
 - materials storage and handling, and spills
 - wastewater management
 - air emissions management
 - noise management
 - chemical waste management
 - solid waste management
- scheduled review/internal audit of site, section, function or work area
- scheduled review/internal audit of components of an workplace EMS, such as:

	• non-conformity, corrective/preventative actions • competence, training and awareness programs • control of records • supplier or contractor performance • emergency preparedness and response • adequacy of environmental management for new or changed operations, processes and work activities • investigation of a complaint, environmental incident or suggested improvements.
Information includes one or more of:	• workplace environmental management policies, procedures, plans and actions, and work instructions • background information, such as: • previous internal review/audit reports • previous external audit reports • records of complaints, incidents, non-conformance/non-compliance and the corrective and/or preventative actions taken • site documentation, such as: • minutes of meetings • log books, records of environmental monitoring and test results, and regular performance reports • records of equipment use, calibration and maintenance • records of training • instructions for contractors and suppliers • external reports (e.g. external experts and regulator) • records of observations, inspections and interviews.
Review/audit results include one or more of:	• observations • findings • examples of best practice • non-conformances/non-compliances with options for corrective and preventative actions, and improvements
WHS requirements include:	• compliance with relevant federal/state/territory WHS legislation at all times • assuming that samples are potentially hazardous and applying standard precautions • accessing and applying current industry understanding of infection control issued by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and state/territory Departments of

Health, where relevant.

Unit Mapping Information

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Links

Companion Volume implementation guides are found in VETNet -

<https://vetnet.gov.au/Pages/TrainingDocs.aspx?q=5b04f318-804f-4dc0-9463-c3fb9a3fe998>

Assessment Requirements for MSS027005 Contribute to improving environmental performance

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Performance Evidence

Evidence of competence in this unit must satisfy all of the requirements of the elements and performance criteria and include demonstration of:

- planning, organising, conducting and evaluating environmental review/audit activities on at least two (2) occasions
- accessing, interpreting and applying relevant legislative and regulatory requirements, audit standards, environmental management plans, workplace policies, procedures and plans for review/audit activities
- preparing for environmental review/audit activities by scrutinising relevant background information, review/audit criteria, tools and evidence requirements
- consulting effectively with interested parties and keeping them informed about the review/audit process
- clearly explaining environmental performance requirements and review/audit procedures
- identifying and obtaining sufficient information to make valid judgements about environmental performance
- analysing information systematically to identify significant performance trends, patterns, gaps and areas of risk; and instances of non-conformance/non-compliance
- evaluating performance against specified benchmarks and identifying corrective/preventative actions and/or improvement strategies
- seeking advice when issues/problems are beyond scope of competence/responsibility
- providing clear, timely reports/briefings containing evidence-based findings and recommendations that enable effective action to be taken
- recognising hazards, assessing risks and working safely.

Knowledge Evidence

- Must provide evidence that demonstrates knowledge of:
- environmental protection/management/audit terminology, concepts, principles and examples of best practice relevant to job role
- legislative/regulatory requirements and compliance strategies
- key aspects of workplace environmental management systems (EMS), policies, procedures and plans
- procedures for conducting environmental performance review/audit activities
- procedures for site sampling, environmental monitoring and testing and reporting of results

- correct use of review/audit tools (e.g. performance criteria, checklists and benchmarks)
- common examples of environmental non-conformance/non-compliance, and corrective/preventative actions and strategies for improving environmental performance
- common issues and problems that may arise when conducting environmental review/audit activities and the recommended actions in each case

hazards and risks relevant to review/audit activities and specified health, safety and workplace emergency response procedures.

Assessment Conditions

- Judgement of competence must be based on holistic assessment of the evidence. Assessment methods must confirm consistency of performance over time, rather than a single assessment event.
- This unit of competency is to be assessed in the workplace, or a simulated workplace environment. A simulated workplace environment must reflect realistic operational workplace conditions that cover all aspects of workplace performance, including the environment, task skills, task management skills, contingency management skills and job role environment skills.
- Foundation skills are integral to competent performance of the unit and should not be assessed separately.
- Assessment processes and techniques must be appropriate to the language, literacy and numeracy requirements of the work being performed and the needs of the candidate.
- Knowledge evidence may be collected concurrently with performance evidence or through an independent process such as workbooks, written assessments or interviews (provided a record is kept in each case).
- Holistic assessment methods include:
 - review of results of review/audit activities and the supporting documentation prepared by the candidate
 - feedback from site personnel, lead auditor or manager that the candidate follows relevant audit standards and procedures and provides reliable outputs within the agreed timeframe
 - oral and/or written questions to assess the candidate's understanding of environmental management terms, principles and information, and workplace procedures for review/audit activities
 - analysis of case studies involving environmental performance issues/problems within the candidate's scope of responsibility
 - observation of the candidate presenting of audit/review findings and recommendations and/or interacting with site personnel during review/audit activities.
- Access is required to all instruments, equipment, materials, workplace documentation, procedures and specifications associated with this unit including, but not limited to:
 - background information for site
 - current site documentation
 - relevant legislation, codes, audit standards, workplace EMS, policies, plans and procedures
 - workplace review/audit procedures and tools

- access to site personnel, computer, internet, workplace reports, published case studies and research.
- Assessors must satisfy the assessor competency requirements that are in place at the time of the assessment as set by the VET regulator.
- The assessor must demonstrate both technical competency and currency.
- Technical competence can be demonstrated through:
 - relevant VET or other qualification/Statement of Attainment AND/OR
 - relevant workplace experience
- Currency can be demonstrated through:
 - performing the competency being assessed as part of current employment OR
 - having consulted with an organisation providing relevant environmental monitoring, management or technology services about performing the competency being assessed within the last twelve months.

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